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Rep. Matsui Helps Secure Support for “Troops to Teachers” Amendment in Defense Authorization Bill

Bipartisan Amendment Will Expand Opportunities for Returning Troops to Teach in Nation’s Schools

WASHINGTON, DC– Today, Congresswoman Doris Matsui (D-CA) helped secure support for an amendment she sponsored with Reps. Joe Courtney (D-CT) and Tom Petri (R-WI) to expand the existing Troops to Teachers (TTT) program. The amendment to the FY 2012 National Defense Authorization Act would reduce existing eligibility requirements in TTT, thereby opening the program to more Iraq and Afghanistan veterans. The comprehensive National Defense Authorization legislation is expected to be voted on by the House of Representatives later today.

“With their proven service, diverse backgrounds, and leadership traits, our nation’s veterans can serve their country again by serving as teachers in our country’s most vulnerable schools,” said Congresswoman Matsui. “I have seen firsthand the success of this program by visiting teachers in my district who returned from service and used the program’s stipend to help pay for teaching certification classes and exams. This amendment is a win-win for our veterans and our students.”

The Troops to Teachers program, originally created in 1994, provides qualified troops with financial incentives to teach in the nation’s neediest schools, but unfortunately only included a relatively small number of districts nationwide. Since its inception, TTT has placed over 12,000 veterans in our nation’s classrooms.

Today’s amendment reduces the threshold of service requirements for those who have served

since 9/11 from six years to four years, making many Iraq and Afghanistan veterans eligible for the program’s \$5,000 education stipend. This amendment is designed to allow participants to teach at any school that receives Title I funds, and result in a 49-percent increase in the number of schools eligible for TTT.

The amendment also establishes a Troops to Teachers Advisory Board to be composed of the DOD director of the program, a representative from the Department of Education and representatives from state TTT offices and veterans service organizations. This board would develop best practices for improving recruitment of eligible service members into the program, increase awareness within eligible school systems, and coordinate the goals of the program with other federal, state, and local education needs and programs.

The board will also address the need to improve awareness of the program, both to eligible members of the military and to communities with a need for highly skilled teachers in key subject areas. It will be required to prepare an annual report to Congress on key elements of the program, including the number of participants in the program, what subjects they are teaching, and where they are serving.

The Amendment mirrors legislation introduced Monday by Reps. Matsui, Petri and Courtney, H.R. 1974, [the Post-9/11 Troops to Teachers Enhancement Act](#) .

To see Congresswoman Matsui’s prepared remarks for debate on the House floor in support of the Courtney/Petri/Matsui Amendment, please click [HERE](#) .

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